

Tuesday, February 28, 2017
6:00-8:00pm
Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force
Meeting #11

Attendees:

- Amanda Alexander | Deputy Chief of Elementary Schools, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
- Evelyn Boyd Simmons | Francis-Stevens parent; W2 Education Network; former member, Student Assignment Committee; President, Logan Circle Community Association
- Shanita Burney | Deputy Chief, Community Engagement, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
- John Davis | Interim Chancellor, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
- Caryn Ernst | Watkins ES, Stuart-Hobson MS parent; former PTA president, Capitol Hill Cluster School; member, Capitol Hill Public School Parent Organization (CHPSPO)
- Carlie Fisherow | Executive Director, Scholar Academies and DC Scholars
- Kemba Hendrix | Elsie Whitlow Stokes PCS parent; former public and public charter school teacher
- Irene Holtzman | Executive Director, Friends of Choice in Urban Schools (FOCUS)
- Faith Gibson Hubbard | Chief Student Advocate, State Board of Education (SBOE); former member, Student Assignment Committee
- Melissa Kim | Chief Academic Officer, Secondary Schools, KIPP DC; former principal, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
- Emily Lawson | Founder & CEO, DC Prep PCS
- Mary Levy | Independent education analyst, former Washington Lawyers' Committee for Civil Rights and Urban Affairs, Parent of DCPS alumnae
- Bethany Little | Murch ES, BASIS PCS parent; Education policy expert
- Claudia Luján | School Turnaround and Performance Division, Office of the Chief of Schools, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
- Scott Pearson | Executive Director, Public Charter School Board (PCSB)
- Alejandra Vallejo | Bancroft ES parent; Chair, Bancroft ES Local School Advisory Team (LSAT)
- Karen Williams | Ward 7 Representative, State Board of Education (SBOE)
- Antwan Wilson | Chancellor, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS)
- Darren Woodruff | EL Haynes PCS, Benjamin Banneker HS parent ; Chair, Public Charter School Board (PCSB)
- Shantelle Wright | Founder & CEO, Achievement Prep PCS; Chair, DC Association of Public Charter Schools

Co-Chairs:

- Jennifer Niles | Deputy Mayor for Education
- Anthony Williams | CEO & Executive Director, Federal City Council; former Mayor

Facilitator:

- Jim Sandman | President, Legal Services Corporation; former General Counsel, DCPS

Members not in Attendance:

- Angela Copeland | Stuart-Hobson MS parent; public affairs specialist
- Erika Harrell | DC Prep PCS parent; Member, My School DC Parent Advisory Council; member, DC School Reform Now; member, PCSB Parent & Alumni Leadership Council (PALC)

- Hanseul Kang | State Superintendent of Education, Office of the State Superintendent of Education(OSSE)
- Charlene Drew-Jarvis | Graduate, District of Columbia Public Schools (DCPS); Senior Advisor, KIPP DC PCS; former Ward 4 City Councilwoman
- Ariana Quiñones | Duke Ellington HS, Cesar Chavez PCS parent, education and human services policy consultant, Otero Strategy Group LLC, former member Student Assignment Committee

Staff:

- Jennifer Comey | Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME)
- Hannah Holliday | Leadership for Education Equity Fellow, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME)
- Rebecca Lee | Policy Advisor, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME)
- Cat Peretti | Executive Director, My School DC, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME)
- Richelle Russell | Data Analyst Fellow, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME)
- Aurora Steinle | Senior Policy Advisor, Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME)
- Ramin Taheri | Office of the Deputy Mayor for Education (DME)

Meeting Summary:

The meeting began at 6:05pm. Deputy Mayor Niles opened the meeting by going over the goals for the meeting and welcoming Ramin Taheri, the new DME staff member who will lead cross-sector work at the DME, including Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force.

First Phase of Recommendations for Promoting Enrollment Stability:

Jenn Comey went over the first phase of recommendations on promoting enrollment stability (handout). She read through the recommendations as they currently appear while also highlighting the previous version of the recommendations that the Task Force reviewed during its January meeting (slides 7-9). She went over the levels of agreement that Task Force members indicated during the January meeting and noted that the Task Force had been in agreement about the revisions that needed to be made to the January version. She invited Task Force members to read through the tracked changes made to the recommendations (slides 11-13).

She pointed out an additional paragraph that had been added to the recommendations per the suggestions of Task Force members. The paragraph notes the Task Force's many discussions on ensuring that students who need to switch schools mid-year have access to services, support, and resources. It also mentions the Task Force's intention to address this aspect of promoting enrollment stability during the coming year.

Task Force member questions/comments:

- Q: When would the Common Lottery Board vote on incorporating the recommendations into My School DC?
 - A: Pending approval from the Mayor to go forward with the recommendations, the Common Lottery Board would vote at the May CLB meeting.

When Ms. Comey asked the Task Force members for any remaining thoughts before moving the recommendations forward and into a memo for the Mayor by the end of the week, the Task Force members had no further comments.

Looking Ahead: The Final Year of the Cross-Sector Collaboration Task Force

Deputy Mayor Niles discussed how the Task Force will now turn its attention toward optimizing the final year of the Task Force. Task Force members and facilitator Jim Sandman have shared their thoughts on moving forward and the DME team had a 3-hour meeting with John Davis, Hanseul Kang, Scott Pearson, Antwan Wilson, and Deputy Mayor Niles last week to discuss how to accelerate the Task Force's work. The Education Leaders made important progress talking through the content the Task Force would cover over the next year and supported the idea of having groups working simultaneously during 2017.

Determining Subject Areas for Working Groups

Ramin Taheri went over the different subject areas that the Education Leaders discussed. He noted that three areas that came through as the top three priorities for Task Force members according to the pre-meeting survey were: 1) Improved Outcomes for At-Risk Students Across LEAs (76%); 2) Framework for Coordinating Processes on the Opening, Closing, and Locating of Schools (71%); 3) Counseling on Supports, Resources, and School Information for Potential Mid-Year Transfers and Entries (59%). The survey included two other subject areas: 4) School Safety and Safe Passage (53%) and 5) Common Enrollment System (41%). He reminded Task Force members to think of these subject areas broadly and as open to refinement either in this meeting or in the working groups.

Mr. Taheri framed each subject area with a question to be answered and some possible considerations. For the Improved Outcomes for At-Risk Students across LEAs, he noted that counseling for students could end up being a part of this subject area as well as part of another subject area.

Task Force member questions/comments:

- There are 27 total members; it is important to think through the math of how many members will be on each working group.
- Q: In the Ed Leaders meeting, did the need to focus on discussing disciplinary policies between the sectors come up at all? It is surprising to see safe passages appear as a possible working group instead of a working group on disciplinary issues.
 - A: (Deputy Mayor Niles) We had nine possible issue areas that we generated before we met for the 3 hours. Discipline fell into one of possible issue areas on that list of nine but the group didn't gravitate toward it. It was not as easy to see how the Task Force could begin to approach it as it was with the other issue areas. We also used a rubric from EducationCounsel to evaluate the subject areas and the five we are discussing tonight rose to the top.
- Q: If the school safety and safe passage issue area survives as a working group, could discipline be part of that conversation?
 - A: The Task Force has the ability to shape the working groups.

Mr. Taheri noted that school safety was not one of the top three issue areas identified in the survey sent out to Task Force members and asked the group to consider the three that rose to the top (Increased Outcomes for At-Risk Students across LEAs; Framework for Coordinating Processes on the Opening, Closing, and Locating of Schools; Counseling on Supports, Resources, and School Information for Potential Transfer and Entries).

Task Force member questions/comments:

- Given that the council just had a whole hearing on discipline and that disciplinary and safety concerns are reasons students leave schools, discipline could be fit into one of the subject areas listed.
- (Ramin Taheri) There are many cross-sector issues that come up but the Task Force has a tight timeline over the next year. School discipline is critical but might not be within the scope of the Task Force, given the time constraints.
- It might fit into number one (improved outcomes for at-risk students). Conversations around number one would put discipline on the table for discussion.
- The notion that discipline leads to poor outcomes for at-risk students is not necessarily true, given that some schools in DC with the highest suspension rates have the best outcomes with at-risk students.

Mr. Taheri asked for any last objections to moving forward using the top three issue areas identified in the survey.

Task Force member questions/comments:

- It will be hard even if the Task Force just does the top three priorities, as these are subjects that are part of the school environment. Discipline is part of the school environment as well so there is no avoiding it.
- (Ramin Taheri) The Task Force might refine the specific issues or questions based on what each group decides it wants to look at. The issue areas posted are broad headings and there will be opportunities for the working groups to come back to the Task Force with the areas they intend to focus on and eventually with possible recommendations. The whole group does need to settle on the number of working groups and the issue areas the groups will tackle.
- Number three (Counseling on Supports, Resources, and School Information for Potential Mid-year Transfers and Entries) might be accomplished with the mid-year entry and transfer process /hardship transfers. Data should be tracked around what is being done with the mid-year entry and transfer process.
- It is possible to ask OSSE and other organizations who work on related things to work with the Task Force on number three.
 - Q: How would this work? Would there be a working group outside of the Task Force or would the Task Force invite others to work come join a working group?
 - A: It would be separate and outside of the Task Force but the group would bring possible recommendations to the Task Force.

- Q: Should counseling be its own working group?
 - A: If counseling is worked on outside of the Task Force (via a collaboration between some Task Force members and another organization) and the Task Force decides to do still do three working groups within the Task Force, it would leave a space for number 4 (school safety and safe passage) to move up and become a working group within the Task Force.
- There is some concern around how aligned school safety and safe passage are to the Task Force: school safety and safe passage sound issues sound like they have a lot of other people already working on them. Having those people come in and get the Task Force's feedback to incorporate into what they are already working on could be an option. However, having the Task Force engage on this issue when all these other people are already engaged in work on school safety and safe passage might not be advisable. This group could provide feedback instead of taking on the work of others.
- School safety comes up all the time. This Task Force member is worried about doing counseling rather than safety because counseling is doubling down on the work the Task Force has already done around mid-year mobility. It would be good to do something in addition to the work the Task Force has already started on mid-year mobility. The group reached consensus on recommendations to put forward around mid-year mobility. Going back into the issue of mid-year mobility through the counseling issue area could bring up areas on which the group reached a stalemate.
- Q: What can be cross-sector about safety?
 - A: Cross- city transportation and interagency coordination are two areas for potential cross-sector collaboration. Parents have to make choices when they send their children to school about whether or not it is safe to put them on public transportation. The Task Force could work on shoring up actual pathways between where families live and where they go to school. LEAs also have very mixed experiences with law enforcement. The city is trying to dismantle the school-to-prison pipeline while also asking police to interact more with students on their way to and from school. The gravitas of this group could help improve interagency coordination around school safety.
- Different groups are working on different pieces of the school safety and safe passage issue area. If the Task Force takes this on as well, what does it mean for those other groups? The Task Force also does not have the right interagency people on it. It is possible to leverage the Task Force to inform the work that has already been started.
- (Deputy Mayor Niles): The Safety Working Group, which is an offshoot of the Transportation Working Group, works out of the DME office. The person who initially led this work left for OSSE and the DME is still in the process of finding someone new to lead the work on safety. The DME can find ways to work with the Task Force on the future work of the Safety Working Group once the new staff members comes on board.
- The Safety Working Group (this Task Force member was a part of the group) often approached the work in a more reactive than a proactive way. This Task Force could weigh in as it is a large issue.
- There could be a slightly different structure: the Task Force could have two other efforts going on involving some of the Task Force members working with people outside of the Task Force. They would have a different timeline and structure from the regular working groups for bringing ideas or possible recommendations back to the full Task Force.

- The above idea is a good one. Number 1 (improved outcomes for at-risk students) should initially have more people on it. This one issue area could also end up having several different offshoots so the Task Force should not commit to doing more than two Task Force working groups right now.
- The working groups should have a structured process and timeline to get the whole Task Force's feedback and add urgency and accountability.
- The other two working groups (counseling and safety) would take advantage of outside expertise with fewer Task Force members.
- Q: Is there a sense of what the optimal working group size would be?
- (Deputy Mayor Niles) The DME is going to create and compose the groups to not be too big while also keeping in mind that people might be interested in more than one thing and would want to see the results from the other group.

Mr. Taheri noted that part of the monthly meetings going forward could consist checking in to ensure the working groups are aligned with the rest of the Task Force. He asked the group to count off into 3 groups (one group for the framework around facilities, one group around outcomes for at-risk students, and one group discuss how to work with outside experts on counseling and safety). He noted that the groups would use the working group template (handout) to guide discussion today.

(See other documents for breakout group notes)

Whole Group Discussion (& Report Out)

Group 2 (Framework for Coordinating Processes on the Opening, Closing, and Locating of Schools):

- The group agreed that the working group template is fine but that the guiding principle should be first on the list of things for the working group to accomplish because it is what the group is aiming for.
- The overview of the issue area should also be completed first.
- The group discussed the issue of obstacles because people are coming from different seats and wearing different hats.
- The group briefly discussed the facilities themselves to start naming the biggest obstacles and what the group would try to accomplish.
- There should also be a clear process for explicit community engagement built into the work of the working groups.
- Working groups need more explicit direction on how the working group will touch back in with the broader Task Force. The group discussed the need to build up trust and understand where each group is moving.

Group 1 (Improved Outcomes for At-Risk Students across LEAs):

- The group saw the ideas on template as guide posts for where the group needs to go.
- There is a need to define what the group would successfully do for at-risk students and how that success could be measured.

- There was robust discussion about areas the working group could tackle, given that at-risk is a broad designation.
- The group noted that collecting data and information about at-risk student outcomes would be a key part of the working group's thought process.

Group 3: (Consulting outside expertise on counseling and safety):

- The group talked about creating a process to use the Task Force as a resource for work going on around safe passage and counseling for students transferring schools mid-year.
- The new DME staff member who will work on safety needs to come on to clarify how the Task Force and the Safety Working Group can work together.
- The Task Force could be consulted for direction around policies that the outside organizations are considering.
- The two groups wouldn't start right away.

Next Steps

Mr. Taheri restated where the group is and highlighted that there is agreement to move forward on working groups 1 and 2. The Task Force would also like to have a working group that collaborates with some outside entities and that might come online later.

Deputy Mayor Niles commented that this is not so much of a working group as a way to use the Task Force to help other efforts move forward.

If Task Force members have further preferences on which group to join, Mr. Taheri instructed them to send him an email by Thursday, March 2nd, EOD. He noted that the DME would put the groups together in a balanced way to ensure all perspectives were represented. He noted that Task Force members would receive information about their working groups by March 3rd.

Task Force member questions/comments:

- Q: How will working groups report back to the entire Task Force? Will all Task Force members have input on the work of each working group?
- A: (Ramin Taheri) The idea is to use this monthly meeting partly as working group time and partly as time for working groups to come to the whole Task Force for information on their work. It is not fully planned yet.
- There needs to be a framework for checking back in with the whole Task Force. If each group were to create a vision or goals and then bring the vision and goals back to the Task Force, other Task Force members could give input. There need to be several clear opportunities for the whole Task Force to give input on the work of the working groups.
- There should be one working group meeting before the March Task Force meeting.

Mr. Taheri commented that the work of the DME team between the end of the February meeting and the March meeting would be to figure out how to refine the focus of the monthly meetings and how to structure the work of the working groups. He noted that there will be a DME staff member supporting each working group who would also gather information and outside input for the working group to utilize.

- Q: The DME already has some reports on safety, etc.; can the Task Force get access to this information?
 - A: (Ramin Taheri) DME staffers will reach out to the different groups with resources once the groups and resources have been created.

Deputy Mayor Niles highlighted the progress that had been made at this meeting before ending the meeting 15 minutes early (due to the closure of Constitution Ave).

The meeting adjourned at 7:45pm